SERQUAL OF LUXURY HOTELS IN KURNOOL CITY

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"Only a Life Lived to the Service of Others is Worth Living"-**Albert Einstein**

Abstract: Food, shelter and clothes are the three basic needs of human lives. Hotel industry or hospitality is the only sector which offers two necessary things among the three; such as food and accommodation. Hence, what is hotel industry or Hospitality industry? Hotel is a part of the hospitality industry is an umbrella term for a broad variety of service industries including, but not limited to, hotels, restaurants and casinos. Hotel is often referred as a "Home away from home". If we consider meaning of hotel in the dictionary, a hotel is a building where you pay to have a room to sleep in and where you can eat meals or a hotel is an establishment that provides paid lodging on a short-term basis. According to A.M. Sheela, the author of the book "Economics of Hotel Management", hotel is the place where the tourist stops being the traveler and become a guest. Hotels typically provide a full range of accommodations and services, which may includes suites, public dinning, banquet facilities, lounges and entertainment facilities.

The present study is an effort to identify the quality attributes of the hotel services in Kurnool City and also try to evaluate service quality and customers satisfaction in the hotel industry in Kurnool. However, in this study, three essential models; SERVQUAL, HOLSERV and LODGING QUALITY INDEX are select for analysis. Furthermore, it reveals the difference in the customer expectations and perceptions for men and women guests related to the hotel services. It includes an inclusive analysis of service offerings, hotel facilities, hotels factors, etc. that affect their choices. It also provides suggestions of disable people about the hotel services. To get the statistic data for the study, one survey with 22 questions will implement. And results will prepare a form for analysis, interpretation and empirical findings of the study.

Key Words: Hotel Industry, Holserv and Lodging Quality, Servqual.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Indian economy is opening up its horizons as it continues to integrate with the world economy. Therefore, the advantages of conducting business with and in India are many. This has lead to the maneuvering of variety of jobs to the shores of India, bringing in its wake transit travelers, business travelers, business meets and holiday seekers. India is the ninth largest civil aviation market in the world in 2014. The sector is projected to be the third largest aviation market globally by 2020. India's aviation market caters to 117 million domestic and 43 million international passengers in 2014. Over the next decade the market could reach 337 million domestic and 84 million international passengers. It is considered as an industry whose main aim is also to make profits for the hoteliers, though this may change at times. Traditional hotels were provided rooms, banquets and restaurants only. But, modern hotels are providing from telephone call services, laundry services, travel services, internet services and recreational, entertainment activities in the hotels.

Changing Face

The Indian tourism and hospitality emerging as a chief growth driver for services industry in India, hotel sector is only poised for further growth. Though economic slowdown has resulted in low occupancy and average room rates for hotels across certain major cities in the country, Indian hotel sector is still expected to show healthy prospects compared to global hotel growth. At a time when global hospitality conditions are still nearing saturation, Indian hospitality sector is being considered as a viable proposition for players.

The Future of Indian Hospitality Sector

The Indian economy is opening up its horizons as it continues to integrate with the world economy. Therefore, the advantages of conducting business with and in India are many. This has lead to the maneuvering of variety of jobs to the shores of India, bringing in its wake transit travelers, business travelers, business meets and holiday seekers. India is the ninth largest civil aviation market in the world in 2014. The sector is projected to be the third largest aviation market globally by 2020. India's aviation market caters to 117 million domestic and 43 million international passengers in 2014. Over the next decade the market could reach 337 million domestic and 84 million international passengers.

Government Initiative

The Government of India and the Ministry of Tourism have contributed significantly to the growth and development of the industry by providing various policy measures, tax incentives and infrastructural support such as-Promotion of rural tourism by Ministry of Tourism in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme, Availability of Medical Visa for tourists coming into the country for medical treatment,100 percent FDI allowed through automatic route in hotel and tourism sector, Insurance of visa on arrival for tourists from select countries like Finland, Japan and New Zealand, Capital subsidy programmes for budget hotels, Elimination of customs duty for import of raw materials, equipment, liquor etc, Five-year income tax holidays for 2-4 star hotels established in specified districts having UNESCO-declared 'World Heritage Sites' Further, the tourism policy of the government aims at development of integrated tourism circuits, speedy implementation of tourism projects, special capacity building in the hospitality sector and new marketing strategies.

Hotels in Kurnool

Kurnool is an III-Tier city in the state of Andhra Pradesh. It is a called as gateway of Rayalaseema Region of Andhra Pradesh, lies on the banks of Tungabhadra river. Kurnool has relatively good connectivity in the form of rail and road transportation. And also be the hub of Temples and Tourism, not only for the state but also for Southern India. It has one of the oldest and famous Temples and Tourism places. Like Belum Caves, Orvakallu Rock Garden, Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary, and also Srisailam, Yaganti and Mahanandi. There are various hotels located in Kurnool and surrounding vicinity. To name few DVR Mansion, Hotel Suraj Grand, The Mourya Inn, Hotel Shobha, and Hotel Sign Regency.

II. SERQUAL

The SERVQUAL service quality model was developed by a group of American authors, 'Parasu' Parasuraman, Valarie A. Zeithaml and Len Berry, in 1988. It highlights the main components of high quality service. The SERVQUAL authors originally identified ten elements of service quality, but in later work, these were collapsed into five factors - reliability, assurance, tangibles, empathy and responsiveness - that create the acronym RATER. Businesses using SERVQUAL to measure and manage service quality deploy a questionnaire that measures both the customer expectations of service quality in terms of these five dimensions, and their perceptions of the service they receive. When customer expectations are greater than their perceptions of received delivery, service quality is deemed low. Thus according to Zeithaml, Bitner and Gremler (2009:107), "a sound measure of service quality is necessary for identifying the aspects of service needing performance improvement, assessing how much improvement is needed on each aspect, and evaluating the impact of improvement efforts" Due to the intangible nature of a service SERVQUAL model was developed to measure customers" evaluations of service quality (Zeithaml, Bitner and Gremler, 2009:151).

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Stephen Ball et al (2007) in their book "Contemporary Hospitality and Tourism" presented a detailed historical development of the Indian hotel sector. This book represented a comprehensive, authoritative and up-to-date analysis of key sectors in the hospitality and tourism industries in China and India. *Roger J. Challan and Gabrielle Kyndt (2001)* in their research paper "Business Travelers" Perception of Service Quality: A Prefatory Study of Two European City Centre Hotels" had analyzed customer satisfaction based on various hotel attributes with different categories of hospitality customers especially business travelers, and reviewed various literatures and surveys on hotel attributes. *Alex M. Susskind (2002)* in his research paper "I told you so- customer's word of mouth" examined how the nature of service failure together with the restaurant's service-recovery effort influenced customer's intentions to return to the restaurant and their subsequent word-of-mouth communication regarding the incident and the restaurant. Karthik Namasivayam and *Timothy R. Hinkin (2003)* in their research paper "The Customer's Role in the Service Encounter: The Effects of Control and Fairness", argued that customers should be allowed some sense of control over the service encounter, if not employees should act in such a way that guests perceive the services as fair and acceptable. *Thanika Devi Juwaheer and Darren Lee Ross (2003)* in his research paper "A study of Hotel Guest Perceptions in Mauritius", carried out a study with the objectives of "assessing the customers" expectations and perceptions of quality in hotels of *Mauritius". Karnikeya Budhwar (2004)* in his research paper "An Analysis of the Gap between Management Perceptions and Customer Expectations", conducted the research to evaluate the crucial factors that would impact the restaurant's success or failure; to identify the gaps between management's and the customers" perceptions; and to analyze choice of cuisines. *Julie Feickert et al (2006)* in their research paper "Safeguarding Your Customers: The Guest's View of Hotel Security", highlighted the concept of acceptance to pay extra for certain security measures.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

The present study is an exceptionally important one from the perspective of dealing and developing the services marketing culture in the industry, particularly in the Hotel & Hospitability sector. In the cutting edge competition and liberalization, those organizations will survive and lead who will maintain service quality. The present study is a humble attempt to identify the major factors based on descriptive research design and addresses very important aspect of service quality in hotel industry especially in Kurnool City.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The present study is confine to select luxurious hotels in Kurnool City. This study focuses on to explore the correlation among select Service Quality dimensions and its impact on Customer Satisfaction. This study may be helpful for the concerning organizations to bridge this gap in order to benefit the society at large and build a profitable proposition to adapt to the specific

requirements of tier three cities. Particularly, this study aims to decisively evaluate the below elements of SERVQUAL in Hotels of Kurnool City.

1. **Tangibility:** Physical Facilities, Equipment, Staff Appearance, etc.
2. **Reliability:** Ability to perform Service dependably and accurately.
3. **Responsiveness:** Willingness to help and respond to Customer need.
4. **Assurance:** Ability of Staff to inspire Confidence and Trust.
5. **Empathy:** The extent to which caring Individualized Service is given.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study SERQUAL, HOLSERV and LODGING QUALITY dimensions in select hotels in Kurnool City.
2. To evaluate the satisfaction of customers expectation and post service behaviour.
3. To evaluate the level of Customer Satisfaction towards select Hotels.

HYPOTHESES

✓ **H₁:** There is a significant difference between the select Hotels regarding the Service Quality that affect Customer Satisfaction.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study is an empirical research in nature. The descriptive research procedure is also used for describing the present scenario in Hospitality sector.

4.1 Sources of Data

For the present study, the data has been gathered from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data was collected by distributing a well structured questionnaire and personal interview from select customers of Hotels in Kurnool City. The secondary data is gathered from Internet, books, research articles, survey reports, newsletters, various journals and magazines.

Sample Size

S.No	Hotel Name	No of Respondents
1	DVR Mansion	20
2	Hotel Suraj Grand	20
3	The Mourya Inn	20
4	Hotel Rajvihar Deluxe	20
5	Hotel Sign Regency	20
	Total	**100**

4.2 Sampling Technique

The sampling method adopted for this study is non-probability convenience sampling method to collect the data from the customers.

4.3 Data Collection Instruments

A well designed structured questionnaire was distributed among the Customers of the select Hotels for primary data collection.

4.4 Statistical tolls and techniques

The collected data is analyzed and interpret by using Weighted Averages, Mean and Correlation coefficient analysis with the aid of SPSS-20 Version.

4.5 Field Work

The fieldwork on the study will start by February 2018 and continued up to April 2018. The data will collect from the customers of 5 major Hotels of the Kurnool City; viz., DVR Mansion, Hotel Suraj Grand, The Mourya Inn, Hotel Shobha, and Hotel Sign Regency in Kurnool.

4.6 Limitations of the Study

1. The study is confined to customers of select Hotels in Kurnool City only.
2. The results of the study cannot be generalized to other Hotels like, Hotels located outside the Kurnool City.
3. The accuracy of given information is merely based on the response of the respondents.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Results of the Study Variables

Table-5.1: Demographic Profile of the select customers

Element	No. of Respondents	Frequency
Age	20-30 years	40.0
	31-40 years	50.0
	41-50 years	0
	51 years and above	10.0
	Total	**100**
Educational Qualifications	SSC	0
	Intermediate	10.0
	Graduation	40.0
	PG & Professional	50.0
	Total	**100**
Occupation	Businessman	40.0
	Private Employee	20.0
	Government Employee	10.0
	Professional	30.0
	Total	**100**
Marital Status	Married	70.0
	Unmarried	30.0
	Total	**100**
Occasions	Vacation	40.0
	Business Trip	50.0
	Daily Life	10.0
	Temporary Living	0
	Total	**100**

Source: Primary data

Table-5.1 exhibits the response rate for the age, educational qualifications, occupation, marital status details and occasions for the customers for visiting and staying in Kurnool Hotels.

The table shows that majority (50 per cent) of the respondents are belongs to the age group of 31-40 years, followed by 20-30 years 40 per cent, and 51 years and above are least with 10 percent. Concern to educational qualifications majority of the customers are post graduates 50 per cent, followed by igraduates 40 percent, and least (10 percent) customers' educational qualification is intermediate. In the case of occupation, majority (40 per cent) of them is businessmen, followed by professionals 30 percent, private and Government employees are 20 and 10 percent. When concerns to marriage 70 percent of them are married and only 30 percent unmarried. And finally majority (50 percent) of the respondents are visiting and staying in Kurnool for business purpose, while 40 percent for vacation and only 10 percent for daily life.

Table-5.2: Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
									Lower	Upper	
Tangibility	Equal variances assumed	.002	.962	-2.891	90	.006	-.68571	.23717	-1.16142	-.21001	
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.838	77.48	.007	-.68571	.24165	-1.17513	-.19630	
Reliability	Equal variances assumed	4.603	.037	-1.022	90	.311	-.08571	.08385	-.25390	.08247	
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.358	84.00	.183	-.08571	.06313	-.21401	.04258	
Responsiveness	Equal variances assumed	.041	.841	-3.249	90	.002	-.50714	.15609	-.82023	-.19406	
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.266	80.30	.002	-.50714	.15528	-.82090	-.19339	
Assurance	Equal variances assumed	.351	.556	.287	90	.775	.05714	.19890	-.34180	.45608	
	Equal variances not assumed			.280	86.53	.781	.05714	.20438	-.35714	.47143	
Empathy	Equal variances assumed	3.008	.089	1.982	90	.053	.52857	.26668	-.00632	1.06346	
	Equal variances not assumed			1.851	82.28	.073	.52857	.28550	-.05277	1.10991	

Source: Primary data

Table-5.3: Group Statistics

	Select Hotels	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Tangibility	SH	100	2.6000	.88258	.19735
Reliability	SH	100	2.8500	.15670	.18230
Responsiveness	SH	100	1.7500	.55012	.12301
Assurance	SH	100	1.4000	.75394	.16859
Empathy	SH	100	2.5000	1.10024	.24602

Source: Primary data

Conclusion:

The research is investigated dimensions of service quality in the terms of select Serqual attributes. The study result proves that reliability, tangibility and empathy are better in Kurnool Hotels whereas the responsiveness and assurance is low. According to the survey results it is confirmed that Hotels in Kurnool city are getting better to attract customers by providing good reliability, tangibility and empathy.

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